



Mexican Wolf Blue Range Reintroduction Project Monthly Update

July 1-31, 2012

The following is a summary of Mexican Wolf Reintroduction Project (Project) activities in Arizona on the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests (ASNF) and Fort Apache Indian Reservation (FAIR) and in New Mexico on the Apache National Forest (ANF) and Gila National Forest (GNF). Non-tribal lands involved in this Project are collectively known as the Blue Range Wolf Recovery Area (BRWRA). Additional Project information can be obtained by calling (928) 339-4329 or toll free at (888) 459-9653, or by visiting the Arizona Game and Fish Department website at <http://www.azgfd.gov/wolf> or by visiting the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service website at <http://www.fws.gov/southwest/es/mexicanwolf>. Past updates may be viewed on either website, or interested parties may sign up to receive this update electronically by visiting <http://www.azgfd.gov/signup>. This update is a public document and information in it can be used for any purpose. The Reintroduction Project is a multi-agency cooperative effort among the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AGFD), USDA Forest Service (USFS), USDA-Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services (USDA-APHIS WS), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the White Mountain Apache Tribe (WMAT).

To view weekly wolf telemetry flight location information or the 3-month wolf distribution map, please visit <http://www.azgfd.gov/wolf>. On the home page, go to the “Wolf Location Information” heading on the right side of the page near the top and scroll to the specific location information you seek.

Please report any wolf sightings or suspected livestock depredations to: (928) 339-4329 or toll free at (888) 459-9653. To report incidents of take or harassment of wolves, please call the AGFD 24-hour dispatch (Operation Game Thief) at (800) 352-0700.

Numbering System: Mexican wolves are given an identification number recorded in an official studbook that tracks their history. Capital letters (M = Male, F = Female) preceding the number indicate adult animals 24 months or older. Lower case letters (m = male, f = female) indicate wolves younger than 24 months or pups. The capital letter “A” preceding the letter and number indicate alpha wolves.

Definitions: A “wolf pack” is defined as two or more wolves that maintain an established territory. In the event that one of the two alpha (dominant) wolves dies, the remaining alpha wolf, regardless of pack size, retains the pack status. The packs referenced in this update contain at least one wolf with a radio telemetry collar attached to it. The Interagency Field Team (IFT)

recognizes that wolves without radio telemetry collars may also form packs. If the IFT confirms that wolves are associating with each other and are resident within the same home range, they will be referenced as a pack.

CURRENT POPULATION STATUS

At the end of July 2012, the collared population consisted of 30 wolves with functional radio collars dispersed among 14 packs and one single wolf. The IFT was able to capture and affix a telemetry collar to a new wolf pup-of-the-year, mp1274, from the Fox Mountain pack this month. Unfortunately, the collar did not stay on the pup. Some other uncollared wolves are known to be associating with radio-collared wolves, and others are separate from known packs.

Seasonal note: Wolf pups are generally born between mid-April and mid-May. The IFT has documented denning behavior for the following packs: Bluestem, Hawks Nest, Maverick, Tsay o Ah, Fox Mountain, Elk Horn, San Mateo, Willow Springs, Luna, Dark Canyon and Middle Fork. The IFT has confirmed the presence of pups in several packs, including Bluestem, Hawks Nest, Fox Mountain and Luna. During the upcoming months, the IFT will be actively trapping various packs to capture, collar and document wild-born pups to estimate their survival.

IN ARIZONA:

Bluestem Pack (collared AF1042 and m1240)

Throughout July, the IFT located these wolves in their traditional territory in the central portion of the ASNF. IFT personnel located the carcass of AM806 within the traditional territory for the Bluestem Pack during July. The death is under investigation by law enforcement personnel.

Hawks Nest Pack (collared AF1208 and m1244)

In July, these wolves continued to use their traditional territory in the north-central portion of the ASNF. The IFT documented the presence of AM1038 with this pack during July; however, this wolf is not included in this report due to its nonfunctioning radio telemetry collar.

Paradise Pack (collared AM795, AF1056, m1243 and m1245)

In July, these wolves were documented using the summer range of their territory on the northern portion of the ASNF and the FAIR. The IFT documented wolf m1245 traveling away from the other pack members within the traditional territory for this pack during July.

Rim Pack (collared AM1107 and AF858)

Throughout July, the IFT located the Rim Pack utilizing its traditional summer range in the south-central portion of the ASNF.

ON THE FAIR:

Maverick Pack (collared AM1183)

During July, the IFT located this wolf on the FAIR, as well as on the west-central portion of the ASNF.

Tsay o Ah Pack (collared AM1253 and m1254)

During July, the IFT located these wolves on the FAIR.

IN NEW MEXICO:**Canyon Creek Pack (collared M1248 and F1246)**

In July, the IFT located these wolves traveling together in the central portion of the GNF.

Dark Canyon Pack (collared AM992, AF923 and f1251)

Throughout July, the IFT located the Dark Canyon Pack within its traditional territory in the west-central portion of the GNF.

Elk Horn Pack (collared F1212)

During July, the IFT located this wolf traveling in the northwest and north-central portion of the GNF.

Fox Mountain Pack (collared M1158 and F1188)

Throughout July, the IFT documented these wolves in the northwest portion of the GNF. IFT personnel trapped and captured mp1274 from this pack in July. The collar, however, slipped off the wolf shortly after it was released.

Luna Pack (collared AF1115 and AM1155)

In July, the IFT located the Luna Pack within its traditional territory in the north-central portion of the GNF. IFT personnel trapped and recaptured AM1155 during July. This wolf was fitted with a new telemetry collar and released back into its territory.

Middle Fork Pack (collared AM871 and AF861)

Throughout July, the IFT located these wolves within their traditional territory in the central portion of the GNF, including the Gila Wilderness.

San Mateo Pack (collared AM1157, AF903 and m1249)

During July, the IFT located these wolves in the traditional San Mateo Pack territory in the north-central portion of the GNF.

Willow Springs Pack (collared M1185)

Throughout July, the IFT located this wolf in the north-central portion of the GNF.

M1252 (collared)

The IFT located this wolf early in July in the central portion of the GNF.

MORTALITIES

IFT personnel located the carcass of AM806 within the traditional territory for the Bluestem Pack during July. The wolf's death is under investigation by law enforcement personnel.

INCIDENTS

During July, IFT personnel investigated seven livestock depredation incidents in the BRWRA.

On July 2, WS personnel investigated a dead cow west of Greens Peak in Arizona. The cause of death could not be determined.

On July 5, WS personnel investigated a dead calf west of Greens Peak in Arizona. The incident was determined to be a black bear depredation.

On July 9, WS personnel investigated a dead calf north of Collins Park in New Mexico. The incident was determined to be a wolf depredation, and the incident was assigned to a member of the Luna Pack.

On July 12, WS personnel investigated a dead calf south of Greens Peak in Arizona. The cause of death was determined to be related to intestinal distress.

On July 16, WS personnel investigated a dead calf west of Greens Peak in Arizona. The incident was determined to be a black bear depredation.

On July 23, WS personnel investigated a dead calf north of Collins Park in New Mexico. The cause of death was determined to be related to intestinal distress.

On July 30, WS personnel investigated a dead calf west of Greens Peak in Arizona. The incident was determined to be a black bear depredation.

CAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

On July 12 and 13, FWS personnel participated in the Mexican Wolf Species Survival Plan annual meeting and Reunion Sobre el Lobo Mexicano in Olympia, Washington, hosted by Wolf Haven International.

COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

Project personnel conducted a variety of contacts with recreationists in Arizona and New Mexico during the course of regular field duties.

IFT personnel coordinated with several livestock producers regarding proactive management of several wolf packs in the BRWRA, including Paradise, Hawks Nest, Bluestem, Fox Mountain, Elk Horn, Luna and Middle Fork Packs.

PROJECT PERSONNEL

Jonathan Fournier, a FWS intern, left the Project this month. Thanks for all of your hard work on the Project, Jonathan!

REWARDS OFFERED

The USFWS is offering a reward of up to \$10,000; the AGFD Operation Game Thief is offering a reward of up to \$1,000; and the NMDGF is offering a reward of up to \$1,000 for information leading to the conviction of the individual(s) responsible for the shooting deaths of Mexican wolves. A variety of non-governmental organizations and private individuals have pledged an additional \$46,000 for a total reward amount of up to \$58,000, depending on the information provided.

Individuals with information they believe may be helpful are urged to call one of the following agencies: USFWS special agents in Mesa, Arizona, at (480) 967-7900, in Alpine, Arizona, at (928) 339-4232, or in Albuquerque, New Mexico, at (505) 346-7828; the WMAT at (928) 338-1023 or (928) 338-4385; AGFD Operation Game Thief at (800) 352-0700; or NMDGF Operation Game Thief at (800) 432-4263. Killing a Mexican wolf is a violation of the Federal Endangered Species Act and can result in criminal penalties of up to \$50,000, and/or not more than one year in jail, and/or a civil penalty of up to \$25,000.